

John F. Kennedy (1961-63)



Democratic President John F. Kennedy's plan for America was known as "*The New Freedom*". In this plan, Kennedy wanted to improve the lives of all Americans by passing many laws and creating several programs that would give assistance to struggling citizens.

1. First, Kennedy was going to improve American education by hiring more teachers and starting the free and reduced school lunch programs we still have today.

2. Next, President Kennedy wanted to expand Social Security, Unemployment Benefits and Health Insurance to more elderly and poor Americans.

3. JFK also wanted to end segregation and provide low cost housing to struggling inner-city Americans as well.

Unfortunately, he was not able to pass many of his ideas because on November 22nd, 1963 President Kennedy was *assassinated* while visiting Dallas, Texas. To make matters worse, 2 days later his accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald was murdered by Jack Ruby while being transferred to a maximum security prison. With the leading suspect dead, the assassination went unsolved and caused many Americans to wonder who was behind the killing.

Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969)



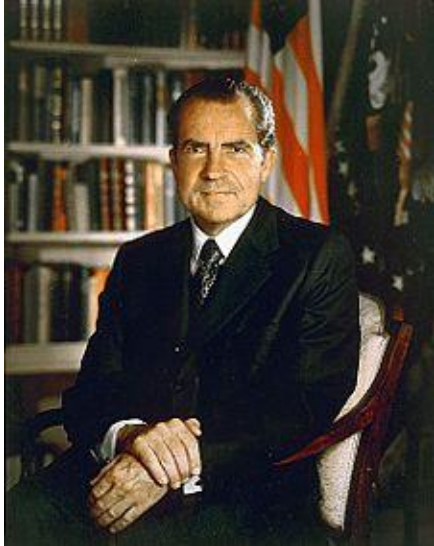
As President, Lyndon B. Johnson developed a plan to improve every American's life called the **Great Society**. Congress had been unwilling to pass such a plan under Kennedy. Johnson, however, was able to get Congress to pass 50 new laws in just his first two years in office.

1. An important Great Society program was Medicare. Under this plan the government would help pay for the hospital bills for citizens over the age of 65.
2. Another program, Medicaid, gave states money to help poor people of all ages with their medical bills.

Johnson was very concerned with helping Americans who were poor. In 1964 the **Economic Opportunity Act** was passed. The law set up job training for the poor and gave loans to poor farmers and businesses in poor sections of our cities.

Lastly, Johnson created the **Department of Housing and Urban Development** or HUD. HUD was responsible for building inexpensive housing for poor and middle class families.

Richard M. Nixon (1969-1974)



Richard Nixon, a Republican, opposed some of Lyndon Johnson's plans because they were too costly. Nixon was responsible for cutting billions of dollars a year from the federal budget. He cut federal funds for job training, low-income housing and education. Because of all of these cuts, Nixon was also able to reduce taxes.

Unfortunately, Richard Nixon is much more famous for the bad things he was involved with. First, Nixon's Vice President Spiro Agnew was forced to resign because he was accused of taking bribes. The American people were shocked.

But, by far the largest domestic thing to happen to Richard Nixon was the *Watergate Affair*. On June 17, 1972, police caught 5 men breaking into the Democratic Party's national headquarters in Washington D.C. Eventually it was found that the President Nixon had tried to cover-up the break in and he was forced to resign in August of 1974. The two highest ranking American officials had been forced to resign and the people of the United States were feeling let down by the government.

Gerald Ford (1974-77)



Many Americans were suspicious of Gerald Ford because one of the first things he did was officially forgive Richard Nixon by giving him a *presidential pardon*.

Also, beginning in the mid 1970's the American economy began to struggle. Prices skyrocketed for things like food and fuel and Ford was unable to help. At the same time, facing competition from foreign countries, American factories began to have to lay off workers in record numbers. Ford's inability to solve the country's economic problems led to his defeat in the Election of 1976.

Jimmy Carter (1977-81)



The American economy was continuing to decline in the mid 1970's. Prices of many items were rising quickly and unemployment was growing as well.

In addition to this, America experienced an *Energy Crisis* in the winter of 1979. Due to a diminishing supply of oil, the gas and heating prices in America skyrocketed and gas stations ran out of fuel to sell. Carter was unable to solve these problems and the American people accused him of being weak and ineffective.

Ronald Reagan (1981-89)



During the 1930's and 1940's Ronald Reagan had been a popular movie actor. His skill of presenting ideas earned him the title of the *Great Communicator*. When he spoke to them on TV, people really thought he cared.

Once in office, Reagan quickly moved to persuade Congress to (1) *cut taxes* to stimulate the economy. Reagan felt that by cutting taxes, people would then begin spending more of their money and businesses would again begin to grow. Reagan also hoped people would save more money which would, in turn, help out the nation's banks.

With fewer taxes coming in, Reagan looked for ways to (2) *cut government spending*. Reagan cut back on aid to social programs such as welfare, money to education, Social Security, and food stamps.

A third goal of Regan's plan to improve the economy involved (3) *ending many of the costly regulations that industries had to follow*. For example, Reagan opposed all laws that required businesses to install costly antipollution devices.



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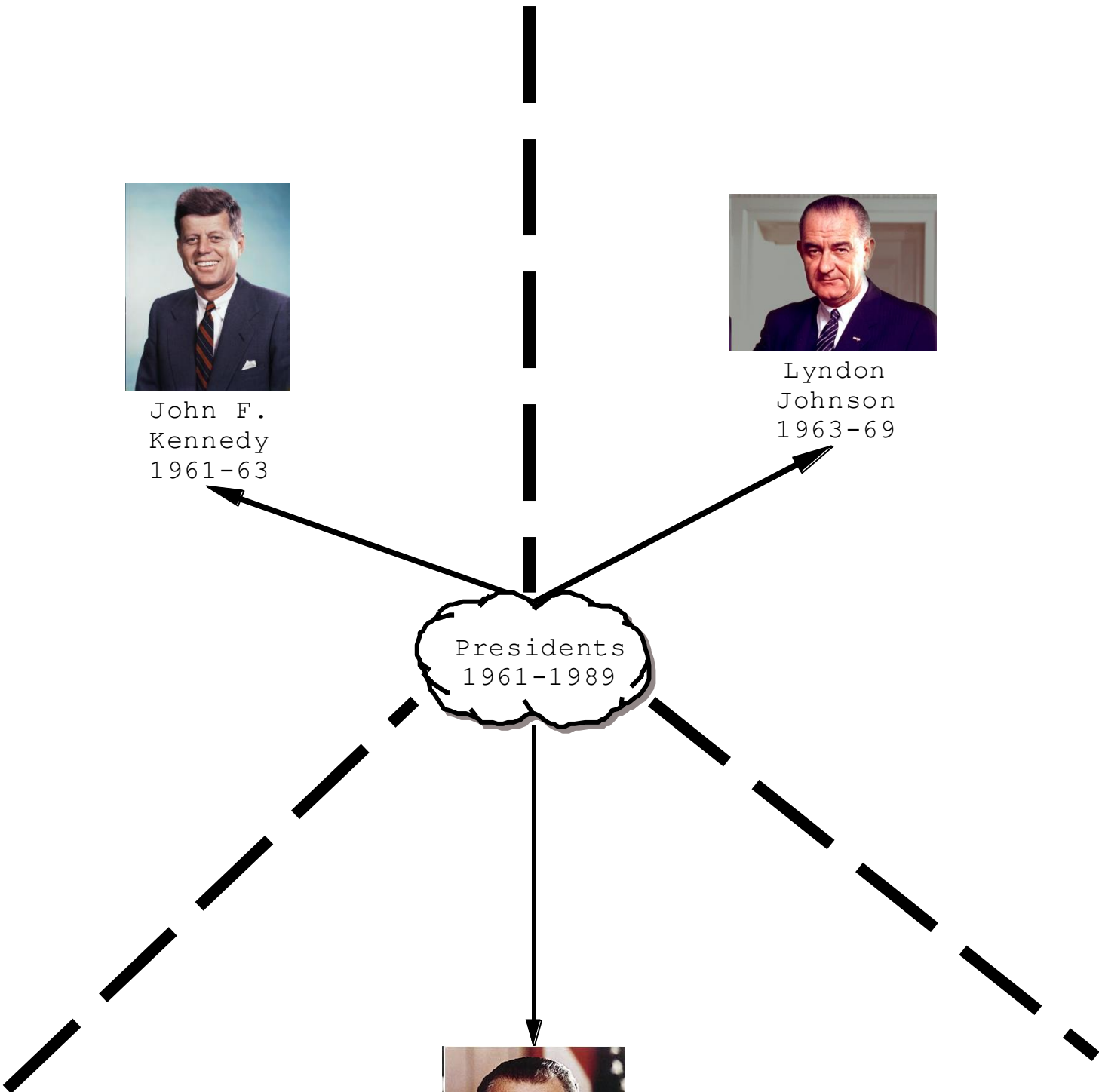


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